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Upper Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

1.32

There used to be a lovely residential area right in the city centre, but in the 1960s the local authority decided to redevelop it as a shopping district. This involved demolishing all the houses and making way for huge car parks so that shoppers from out of town could park their cars. What’s strange is that no one really considered opposing the idea at the time. Even the residents seemed to accept that the area had to be modernised. If you proposed converting houses into shops on such a big scale today, I don’t think you would be allowed to do it.

Anyway, the result was that they spoilt the character of the centre. People shopped there in the daytime but at night everyone avoided going there because it became a centre for drug dealing and crime. Now, 50 years later, the local authority wants to transform it into a mixed area again by building new homes. The trouble is that rents are so high that ordinary people, like the ones who were moved out originally, can’t afford to live there anymore.